



The 2018 Tax Statement



A newsletter of the Galveston County Tax Office – Where the race for quality has no finish line



from the desk of

Cheryl E. Johnson

Another whirlwind year has nearly passed and the changes have been many! In 2017 we partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife to perform water vessel and boat motor registration and title services. This allowed a half time position to be increased to full time which finally restored us to pre-Ike staffing levels. Best of all? Within the first four months, the County was in the black with the additional staffing and, at the end of one full year, new revenue to the County was over \$45,250 and more than \$8,500 was earned by my office for the work performed.

So...boat owners or soon-to-be boat owners, use the County Tax Office! Register the trailer and boat at the same time, keep your money local (*helping to reduce cost*) AND remember – WE accept credit cards! How convenient that you can pick up an extra ID card before heading to the Lake, Bay or Gulf!

An on-going goal of our office has been to implement technologies to streamline operations. You may recall we began processing tax payments in house about five years ago which resulted in savings of \$40,000/year in bank fees. This year, we added remote capture at branches. This results in funds paid by check/money order/cashiers check being deposited immediately. As a result, we

are saving about six hours a day in time once spent in close outs meaning more time to provide services to you!

Over the summer, we invested in scanning software (*at no cost to you*) so motor vehicle registration renewals can be mass processed. Our standard turnaround time was three business days. We are hoping to cut a day from that as we become proficient using the system. Also, launched in September, automobile, motorcycle, boat and heavy equipment dealers may now go online to submit special inventory tax renditions and payment. We are hoping as we move this across the county that this system helps facilitate those industries and lightens our staff load allowing more time (*again*) to provide exemplary customer service.

We are putting together drafts for the 86th Legislative Session and, as usual, have listened to your complaints and concerns and turned those into reform proposals. I expect property tax reform measures to be hotly debated, school safety to be on the forefront of discussion and, of course, disaster reappraisal and flood prevention.

Disaster installments are again available (*four equal installments due every other month until paid*). As usual, **if taking advantage of split/half pay or quarter installments – make sure your mortgage company allows it!**

Cheryl

Contact GCTO Full time locations open 8 am to 5 pm Monday – Friday

General Information..... (409) 766-2284 or Toll Free (877) 766-2284
 Fax..... (409) 766-2479
 Email..... galcotax@co.galveston.tx.us
 Website..... www.galcotax.com
 Cheryl E. Johnson, Tax Assessor/Collector..... (409) 766-2260
 Sheryl R. Swift, Chief Deputy Business Services (409) 766-2474
 Ken Florence, Chief Deputy Property Tax & Administration..... (409) 766-2476
 Property Tax Department..... (409) 766-2481
 Motor Vehicle Registration Information (*Galveston Branch*) (409) 766-2485
 Voter Registration Department (409) 766-2280 or Toll Free (888) 976-2280

GCTO 10 COMMANDMENTS (+1) OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

1. The customer is never an interruption to our work – the customer IS our work
2. Brighten every customer's day, greet everyone with a smile
3. Whenever possible, acknowledge customers by name
4. Project professionalism, courtesy and dignity to everyone
5. State things in a positive way
6. NEVER argue with a customer
7. Always go the extra mile to provide assistance
8. Never say, "I don't know what to do" without saying, "but I would be more than happy to find out."
9. Never blame someone else
10. Never forget that the customer pays our salary
11. Be remarkable!

HAVE A MORTGAGE?

For the second time, we mailed tax statements to ALL property owners (*except for e-statement requests*), **even if a mortgage company requested it.** This was originally done in 2017 to prevent delinquencies because the wrong company requested the statement!

We were unsuccessful passing a bill in the 85th Session to eliminate the need for this but will try again. If County Commissioners adopt a policy allowing us to approve waivers of penalty and interest as a clerical error on our part rather than spend \$20,000 (*primarily in postage costs*) for this mailing, we will not have to continue this practice.

If you have a mortgage company and escrow your property taxes, take a moment to call them to confirm it requested the statement. If you refinanced, insure the proper company receives the statement! **DO NOT** make a payment if the company requested the bill!

CHECK OUT OUR NEW TAX STATEMENT DESIGN!!

Ways to Pay

1. In person weekdays 8 am to 5 pm.
2. Mail payment in enclosed envelope (*include coupon*).
Be sure postmark is timely for payment option!
3. Go online to www.galcotax.com, click on the large red button, locate account and pay via credit or debit card or e-check. Fees apply!
4. Pay with credit or debit card via telephone. Call toll free (*English*) 1-866-865-1433 or (*Spanish*) 1-866-865-1435. Fees apply!
5. Drop in a marked GCTO payment box located at all but the Crystal Beach office. Items picked up at 8:30 am!

GCTO Locations

Galveston Courthouse, 722 Moody, Galveston (*Branch, Administration, Accounting, Property Tax and Voter Registration*)

North County: 174 Calder, League City

West County: 11730 Highway 6, Santa Fe

East County: 2516 Texas Avenue, Texas City

Satellite Offices: (*Offices close Noon to 1 pm*)

946 Noble Carl Rd, Crystal Beach (*3rd Tuesday each month 8 am to 4:30 pm*)

910 S Friendswood Dr, Friendswood (*Thursday & Friday 8 am to 5 pm*)

Appraisal Districts

County appraisal districts (CAD) are responsible for locating, listing and appraising properties. They also handle exemptions, name, address and ownership changes. We will provide forms and assist whenever possible or you may contact the appropriate CAD as shown:

Galveston CAD 9850 EF Lowry Expressway (FM 1764), Texas City ☼ www.galvestoncad.org (409) 935-1980 or (866) 277-4725 toll free

Email: gcad@galvestoncad.org

Harris CAD 13013 Northwest Freeway (SH 290),

Houston ☼ www.hcad.org

(713) 957-7800 ☼ Email: help@hcad.org

2019 Property Tax Seminars

Learn to Protest Your Appraised Value. Except for the United Way Training Center program, classes begin at 6pm and last two hours (*including Q&A*). Can't attend? After April 1st, download materials (*Press Releases and Important Information link*) at www.galcotax.com. **Don't miss the May 15th deadline to schedule your CAD appointment!**

Date Location

4/25 United Way Trailing Facility, 2800 Texas Ave., Texas City

4/30 League City Council Chambers, 200 W. Walker, League City

5/2 COM Learning Resource Center, 1200 Amburn, Texas City

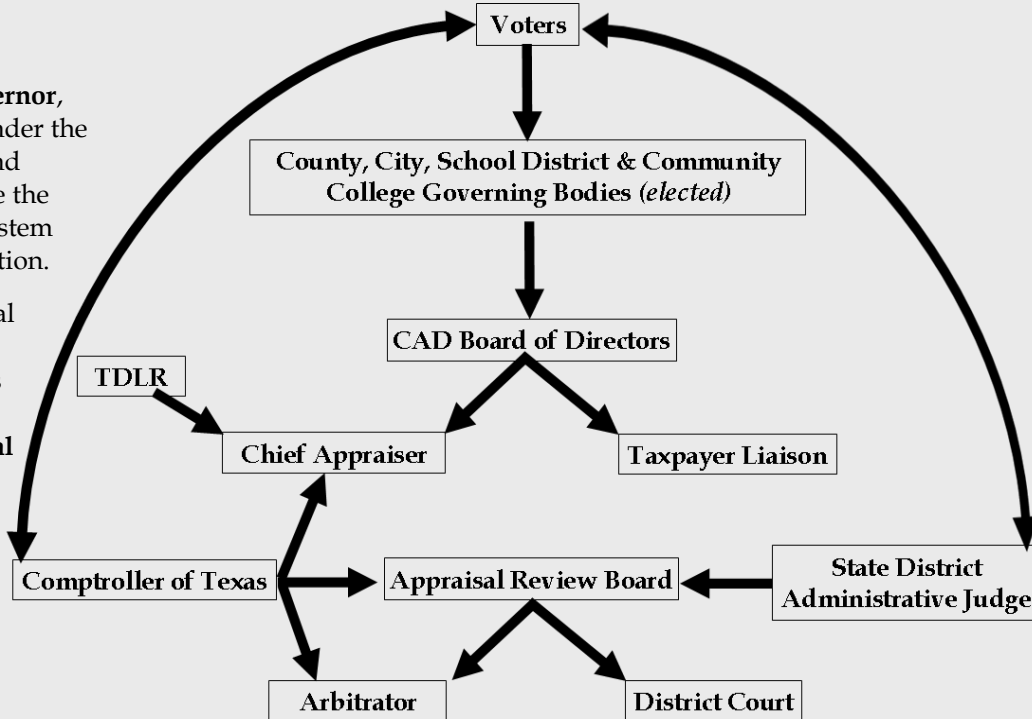
5/7 Commissioners Courtroom, 722 Moody, Galveston

Who's Who in the Texas Tax System?

Under the leadership of the **Governor**, the Legislature (**Senate** who is under the leadership of the **Lt. Governor** and **House of Representatives**) create the laws that impact the Texas tax system as allowed by the Texas Constitution.

Voters pass (or not) Constitutional amendments and elect the Governor, Lt. Governor, Senators and House members making them or YOU the **most influential** player in the entire process!

If you have concerns, contact your elected officials at EVERY level!



To obtain assistance or update name or address information, please complete the form below, cut along dotted line and return in the enclosed envelope along with payment. Be certain to write your account number and **PLEASE** do not write on the coupon!

ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____